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**The situation in the Middle East**

**Question of Palestine**

## Letter dated 21 November 2012 from the Permanent Representative of Brazil to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I have the honour to transmit herewith a statement issued on 21 November by India, Brazil and South Africa (IBSA) on the situation between Israel and Palestine (see annex).

I should be grateful if you would have the present letter and its annex distributed as a document of the General Assembly, under agenda items 36 and 37, and of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Maria Luiza Ribeiro **Viotti**
Ambassador
Permanent Representative of Brazil to the United Nations

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## Annex to the letter dated 21 November 2012 from the Permanent Representative of Brazil to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

## The situation between Israel and Palestine

India, Brazil and South Africa express their strongest condemnation of the ongoing violence between Israel and Palestine, which threatens the peace and security of the region. The IBSA countries deeply regret the loss of human lives and express their concern over the disproportionate and excessive use of force.

They urge the parties to immediately cease all violence, to exercise maximum restraint and to avoid taking any action that may further exacerbate the situation. They stress their expectation that the United Nations Security Council will do its utmost in the fulfilment of its responsibilities in regard to this serious situation.

They also stress the urgent need to lift the blockade on Gaza, which continues to worsen the already dire socioeconomic and humanitarian situation in Gaza.

The IBSA countries express their strong support for the mediation efforts of the Government of Egypt, the League of Arab States and the United Nations Secretary-General aimed at achieving a negotiated ceasefire.

The IBSA countries believe that only diplomacy and dialogue will lead to the resolution of the current crisis, which makes it even more urgent to resume direct talks between Israel and Palestine, leading to a comprehensive solution to the Palestinian question, i.e., the achievement of a two-State solution.

In view of the upcoming General Assembly discussion on the question of Palestine, India, Brazil and South Africa express their support for Palestine's request to be accorded observer State status in the United Nations system.